

I N S A T I A B L E

Sala Thai comes to Petworth

Estadio to Open in Logan

BY CELESTE MCCALL

“I’m exuberant,” exclaimed Mayor Adrian Fenty at the June 15 unveiling of Sala Thai-Petworth. The mayor also praised Chris Donatelli Builders Inc., as well as DC council members, friends and neighbors for bringing this “first class restaurant” to the Petworth neighborhood. Introducing Fenty was Ward 4 council member Muriel Bowser. Ward 1 council member Jim Graham also addressed the crowd.

Besides the local politicians, the jam-packed reception featured chef Suthep Comdet’s sushi, larb gai (incendiary chicken salad), chicken wings and “drunken” noodles. All this with beer and wine and mellow sounds by the Triple Double Jazz Band. As the crowd grew, the party spilled out into the front patio. Located at 3716 Georgia Ave. NW, the 80-seat Asian newcomer is ensconced in the glitzy Park Place at Petworth Metro apartment complex, a few yards from the Georgia Avenue/Petworth Metro Station Yellow/Green Line. Owned by Oy Changsilta, this is Sala Thai’s third restaurant; others are at 1301 U St. NW and in Bethesda. The original, which opened near Dupont Circle in 1978, closed last year. For more information call 202-629-1643 or visit www.salathaidc.com

Japanese Fare

Now here’s a real find: The other night we were headed for a U Street restaurant when we stumbled upon what appeared to be a travel agency. The building was situated at 2004 17th St. NW, just off U. Closer inspection revealed Hana Japanese market, a tiny but well stocked grocery. There we found some fresh produce (Napa cabbage, daikon radishes), instant soba soup, miso paste, frozen (and dried) fish, Ramen noodles, Japanese candies and oceans of teas. Hana is open daily from 10 to 7 p.m. For more information call 202-939-8853.



Mayor Fenty and DC council members Muriel Bowser and Jim Graham were among the many guests attending the opening reception of Sala Thai Petworth. Photo: Thea Bowers.

Bistro La Bonne – Mais Oui!

When we did make it to U Street, we noticed that Polly’s Café, 1342 U, is still undergoing a major rehab. Nearby, we also saw World Cup soccer fans streaming into the charming Bistro La Bonne to cheer on the French team. No doubt they were also enjoying the extensive beer selection, along with chef Daniel La Bonne’s traditional Gallic fare: several mussel dishes, onion soup, lobster bisque, cassoulet and crème brûlée. Open daily (‘til late), including Saturday and Sunday brunch, Bistro La Bonne is located at 1340 U St. NW; call 202-758-3413 or visit www.bistolabonne.com.

Blooming

The Bloomingdale neighborhood is — well — blooming! The unpretentious Windows Café, 101 Rhode Island Ave. NW, offers free internet connection along with coffee, cakes and other pastries, fruit juices and smoothies. Windows Café is open daily from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Call 202-462-6585 or check out the nifty website: www.windowscafe.com.

Estadio to Open in Logan

This month, Mark Kuller and executive chef Haidar Karoum (who operate Penn Quarter’s Proof) are launching Es-



Executive chef Haidar Karoum (who also presides over the kitchen at Proof) helps launch Estadio at Logan Circle. Photo: Andrew Lightman.

tadio at 1520 14th Street NW. Estadio, which means “stadium” in Spanish, showcases contemporary, mainly Northern, Spanish cuisine.

Kuller and Karoum traveled extensively throughout Spain to develop Estadio’s menu: tortillita de camarones (small shrimp pancakes), fideos (Iberian pasta), salmorejo (thickened gazpacho), tapas and other snacks, called “pintxos” in the Basque region.

Estadio is open for dinner only (commencing at 4 p.m.), with weekend brunch starting this fall and weekday lunch next year. Much like Proof, Estadio offers quesos (cheeses) and embutidos (charcuterie). Breads are baked in house.

To complement the eclectic cuisine, wine director Sebastian Zutant is assembling a wine list with almost 300 labels. Selections are mostly Spanish, with some South American, Portuguese, and domes-

tic choices. An Enomatic machine dispenses 16 temperature-controlled wines by the glass, many priced under \$10. Bottles are tagged between \$20 and \$75, with a few high-end rarities like Vega Sicilia’s Unico. Naturally, you can order sangria, ideal for summer sipping.

Kuller is working with Grizform Design to create “a contemporary Spanish style” with reclaimed 19th century Spanish tiles, Spanish marble, reclaimed timber and wrought iron for three large, custom-built communal tables. Bullfighting and flamenco murals will cover the walls. In the 115-seat restaurant, a concrete bar will accommodate 21, and a handsome marble counter will overlook the open kitchen. There’s also a private dining room.

Estadio is located at 1520 14th Street NW (between the U Street and Dupont Circle metro stops. For more information, call 202-319-1404 or visit www.estadio-dc.com.

Honors

Mid City DC restaurants are definitely getting attention, as we learned from last month’s

RAMMY Awards. At the black tie event, more than 1,500 restaurant industry members and guests celebrated the announcement of the 20th annual Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington (RAMW) awards at the Marriott Wardman in Woodley Park. Among establishments honored was Logan Circle’s Birch & Barley (1337 14th St. NW), which was named “Best New Restaurant.” For the “Hottest Restaurant Bar Scene,” Birch & Barley, shared honors with its upstairs sister restaurant, ChurchKey. “Favorite Neighborhood Gathering Place” went to nearby Cork Wine Bar, 1720 14th St. NW. Congrats all around! ♦

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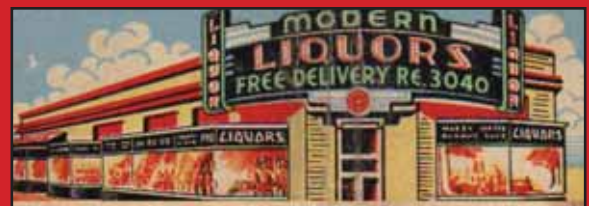
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